Syn. 7. 63. 374

VERTUES REWARD

WHEREIN

The living are incouraged unto good worker, from the blessed memory which they dead for so doing, doe leave behinde them.

Cicer. 1. de Divin.

Danda est diligenter opera: ut hominum aures optime de nobis sermone compleantur.

Printed in the yeare 16[illegible]

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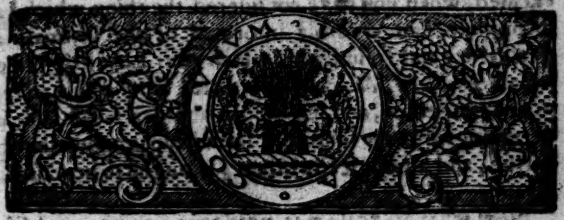

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VERTUES REWARD,

WHEREIN

The living are incouraged unto good works, from the blessed memory, which they dead for so doing, do leave behinde them.

Right Honourable:

IF I had not a great deale of confidence both towards God, & in your Lordships vertuous disposition, I durst not thus upon so litle acquaintance have undertaken to write unto you; But the cause of my writing being of importance, the subject considerable, and the motive a loving respect to your Lordships worth.

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I hope my addreſſe will be taken in good part, and be excuſed, when you have conſidered the thing which I am to propoſe. I am credibly informed of the intimate acquaintance and freindſhip, which your Lordſhip did entertaine with *N. N.* during his life. Friends uſe to ſympathize together, and ſecond one another in laudable undertakings. For the ſubject of friendſhip is none other, but vertue, and amongſt Chriſtians, it ought to be Chriſtian vertue.

Now what his zeale was unto true vertue, and Chriſtianity, I my ſelfe can teſtifie, who have experimentally found it, in the converſation which I have had with him. Hee was a man of a large and publicke ſpirit, and a promotor of every good worke, but chiefly of ſuch undertakings that were moſt likely to produce the beſt effects towards Religion and vertue, in the commonwealth of Iſrael.

To further theſe ends, and the inſtruments of ſuch workes as might ſerve to advance the ſame, I have found his ſpirit alwaies inclined, and his affections very induſtrious. Few I know were equall or like unto him in this for ſagacity to find out wayes for compaſſing matters ſubſerving to thoſe aymes, and for conſtancy in proſecuting the ſame for the publique good without private reſpects.

This many others are able to witneſſe, who in his departure have found a greater diſadvantage and loſſe then either they or I am able, or willing at this time to expreſſe. For in effect he was a moſt ready Patron unto every one of them, in all theſe enterpriſes which are moſt eminent

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and glorious for the setting forward of Learning and Religion, wherein their whole study is taken up.

As for me, I have found a losse in him, because he was pleased to honour mee, and my desiignes also with some measure of good will and affection, whereby I was encouraged to proceed in these undertakings. But now since his death (or rather passage to a better life) both in other publique endeavours and mine, those encouragements are greatly failed, although the occasion of dooing more good now, then ever heretofore be greatly encreased, and the apparent exigency of affaires doth require now a great deale more then formerly it hath done, faithfull Agents to be imployed in all these waies. This maketh us to cast up our eyes towards God, to see what helpe he will afford to us in his service.

And least wee should seeme to neglect the meanes of procuring helpe unto our selves, wee are bound to looke out for Patrons, who are able to judge of worthy enterprises, and willing in a laudable way to promote the same.

We see that worldly men, can undertake pleasing works to flesh and bloud (although their endeavours reach no further then to give a private contentation to some few) doe find Patrons of pleasure and earthly delight, which soone vanish, and leave a sting of death in the soule behinde them.

Why then shall not we have hope to find (by the grace of God) favour in the eyes of some of Gods children, that set a price upon vertue, and can judge of laudable undertakings? Shall wordly men that serve others in their sinnes

and

and vanities, find a more comfortable being, and favourable entertainement amongst worldlings & sinners, then godly men that serve all men in Righteousnes and Vertue, can find amongst the best Christians and professors of godlinesse.

What priviledge have they to Gods creatures more then we? Shall they be bold to crave assistance, and helpe, and maintenance for feeding men with vaine and flattering lusts? And shall not wee dare to open our mouthes when we are destitute of help and meanes of necessary substance to prosecute the best enterprises that can bee (I speake it without boasting) by any man undertaken? Surely they have no greater right to Gods creatures then wee, because God never made any creature for them, but onely for his owne children, who in his kingdome shall be heires of all things.

And they ought not (if all bee right with us) to have greater interest in the affections of Christian men, then we should have. And yet we see that it falls out otherwise. For those servants are mainteined in abundance of wealth, and want nothing, which apply themselves to humour and flatter men in their outward delights.

But those that set themselves to advance Learning, vertue, truth, peace, and godlinesse, can scarse finde the support of necessary food and rayment. Those that serve private mens turnes, in this or that particular are cared for and supplied.

But those that serve the publique in a generall work, are neglected, and left destitute of all comforts. What should be the cause of this? Namely that now, the prophesie of the

the Apoſtle, 2 Tim. 3. 1. till 6, is fulfilled. Where he ſaith, That perillous times ſhall come upon the Church, wherein amongſt other vices, which ſhould reigne amongſt men profeſſing Chriſtianity, the firſt and the laſt are moſt conſiderable.

The firſt is; That men ſhould bee lovers of themſelves. And the laſt. That they ſhould bee lovers of pleaſures, more then lovers of God, and ſo conſequently ſhould have a forme of godlineſſe, but deny the power thereof.

This propheſie is now fulfilled, and becauſe in the love of themſelves and of their pleaſures, more then of God and godlineſſe, they have loſt the power of religion, and the zeale of good workes. Therefore all charity is become cold, and there is no reſpect had to any publicque good further then it ſerveth for ſome private end of ſelfe love, and particular contentation.

I ſay not this of all, but yet it muſt bee ſaid of the moſt part of Chriſtians. For it is prophecied of them, as we find the propheſie by experience fulfilled. It doth not beſeeme us to ſet forth our owne endeavours, for thoſe that commend themſelves are not approved of God.

But yet ſeeing neceſſity doth conſtraine us to open our mouthes to complaine over the miſeries of the times, wee cannot but ſhew ſome expreſſions of greif for the indignity of the matter, that the beſt, moſt neceſſary, moſt profitable, moſt glorious, and laudable objects and enterpriſes, ſhould be with the Agents thereof, neglected, diſpiſed, and nothing at all cared for, in compariſon of many other worldly buſineſſes, which are ſo farre inferiour to thoſe, that they are not at all worthy to bee thought upon, or cared for,

by reall and honeſt Chriſtians, who with patience in well doing, ſeeke for honour, glory, and immortality.

Certainly, it is not unlawfull for us, nor unbeſeeming to us, to commend unto all mens conſiderations, the purpoſes wherein we ſpend our time, and take paines for the publique good. Wee are not aſhamed of our profeſſion, but we are loth to ſeeme to commend our ſelves, and to be lyable to the occaſions of ſuſpicion which worldly men might take up againſt us, as if we ſought our ſelves in theſe endeavours, and would make of them a pretext of coveteouſneſſe.

Therefore wee cannot uſe that freedome, to challenge unto our ſelves neceſſary helpes and ſupplies, which others without craveing more cunningly can obteine for the reward of delightfull ſervices. And hence it is, that we are deſtitute of needfyll aſſiſtance becauſe wee are loth to ſet forward our ſelves by craving.

And others when we are ſilent, take not at all notice of our induſtrious and chargeable undertakings, how profitable, and neceſſary they are for the publicque. Wee do find few like unto *N.N.* able to judge of the importance of affaires, and zealous to mainteine the ſame for the good of Chriſtianity.

He was one of a thouſand in this kind, and therefore the greater is his loſſe unto us, by how much we are doubtfull to whom to make our addreſſe, that his place may be ſupplied.

Now becauſe the friendſhip, which hath been between your Lordſhip and him, and the commendations of your vertuous, generous, and godly diſpoſition, which we have heard,

heard, do promiſe us ſome acceptance and freedome of acceſſe unto your Honours pious affections.

Therefore I have made bold, not ſo much for my ſelf, as for my other yoke fellows in publicque matters to intimate, that the want of *N. N.* his Patronage is the cauſe of great affliction both unto them and me; and a mighty hinderance of the beſt endeavours that can be ſet upon this age.

If I durſt be ſo free, as to intreat your Honour to ſupply *N. N.* his place towards us, I would promiſe to make two things apparant. Firſt, that charitable affections cannot bee more worthily beſtowed then upon this attempt, to further the ſame.

And ſecondly that the patronage of ſuch men, is as laudable and neceſſary a thing, and as worthy of a noble ſpirit his undertaking, as any object, that can bee thought upon in this age.

If I may have leave to make theſe two propoſitions good, and without offence, to preſent the demonſtration thereof unto your Lordſhip, I hop your *Honour* will ſee a cauſe ſufficient to move me at ſuch a diſtance to write ſo largely on this ſubject, from which, (leaſt I ſhould ſeeme importune) I will now deſiſt, and craving pardon for being ſo long, I humbly take my leave, and will reſt,

Novemb. 13. 1638.

Your Lordships moſt reſpective ſervant in Chriſt.

November 13.
1638.

Your Excellency's most respectful
Servant in Christ.

SIONS SUITE,

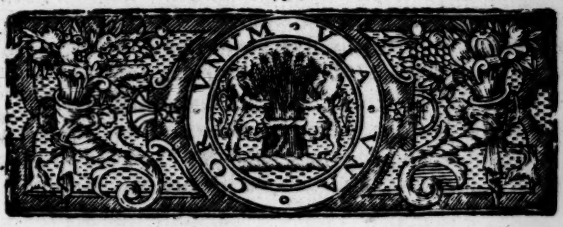
OR

A Treatise conteyning many vvaighty reasons, to induce all godly people to helpe forevvard the vvork of a publique reconciliation amongst Protestants.

2 *King.* 19,3.

The children are come to birth, and there is no strength to bring forth.

Printed in the yeare 1638.



SIONS SUITE

OR

A TREATISE CONTEINING many waighty reasons, to induce all godly people to helpe forewarde the worke of a publicque reconciliation among Protestants.

Right Honourable:

BMade bold about a Moneth a go to lay open some thoughts unto your pious consideration, concerning the right and intereſt which some of my deare friends and I may challenge in the affections of all vertuous, godly, noble, and learned men. I hope my freedome was not offensiue, because it didproceed from an high estimation of your

your Lordſhips worth, from the intimacy which I have had with your Honours worthy freind now a ſleepe, and from an upright zeale to advance the glory of God, in the edification of many, whoſe good we labour to procure.

The teſtimony of our conſcience concerning the ſincecerity of our intentions doth bear us up in this confidence of ſuing for helpe, and the conſtancy of our endeavours approved through many trialls, doth beare witneſſe aſwell to our ſelves as others of the ſincerity of our hearts in theſe undertakings.

Therefore wee ought not to be aſhamed of our profeſſion, becauſe we ſuffer for it, if not open perſecution, yet that which is æquivalent, namely ſecret miſery, great ſtraites, and continuall affliction of ſpirit, which befalleth unto us, by reaſon of the burdens of moſt painfull taskes, we do proſecute for the advancement of Chriſtianity and Learning.

We have now cauſe to complaine over the wretchednes of theſe times, but it is to be feared that hereafter we ſhall have greater cauſe to doe the ſame, becauſe the worſer the times grow, the leſſer helpe wee are likely to receive.

For it is evident that when factions are multiplied, charity is reſtrained, becauſe alwayes when men begin to chooſe parties, then they affect nothing, but their owne ſide. And if any be not wedded to a partiall way, he is commonly neglected, if not alſo ſuſpected, and hated of all ſides.

This I feare is now or will be our caſe, if either theſe turbulent times continue, or if in them wee ſhould not

open

open our mouthes to ſhew the evident neceſſity, and pregnant uſefulnes of our moſt laborious endeavours. Therefore amidſt the broiles of this age, we ſhould betray our owne cauſe, and neglect both our duties and our ſelves, if we ſhould not breake off ſilence, and in meekneſſe labour to move judicious men to regard the uſefulneſſe of our purpoſes, and the equity of our deſires.

It was the Prophet *Iſaiah* his complaint; That *none called for Juſtice, nor any pleaded for truth.* I know not how farre now wee may ſay the ſame. Sure I am that few do it.

And although many there be that ſeeme to call both for truth and for Juſtice, yet it is commonly in a partiall way rather to condemne and triumph over ſome Antagoniſt, or other, then to winne them unto the love of righteouſneſſe.

Therefore alſo unto us now it befalleth as then it did unto them. That judgment is far off from us, and Juſtice doth not overtake us. Wee have waited for light, but behold obſcurity, for brightneſſe, but ſtill we walke in darkneſſe, we grope for the wall like blinde men, we grope as if we had no eyes, we ſtumble at noon day as in the night, and we are in deſolate places as dead men. And although we all rore like Beares, and mourne ſore like doves, by reaſon of our heavy calamitie, yet the remedies thereof hitherto are not found out, but our ſalvation is ſtill farre off.

I will not ſettle my ſelfe to exaſperate matters by complaints, leaſt I ſhould ſeeme to feed the diſcontented humours of this age.

But as my purpose is, to seeke out, and advance the remedies thereof, so I may freely declare that except the way of peace in the profession of Religion, and the way of right education in Learning bee carefully sought for, & found out, except the spirits of Clergy men be wrought upon, to intend the meanes of publicque edification in the communion of Saints one towards another, except Christianity it selfe, without all partiall respects to this or that particular ayme, in this or that profession be maynteined, and except such remedies of our ignorance and confusion be sought for, which may reach unto the rootes, and fundamentall causes of our disease: it will be altogether impossible by any meanes to cure the same.

Now the remedies which are appliable to the fundamentall cause of these evills, are reducible to three heads, answerable to the three causes of our miseries, to the three affected parts of the life of man, and to all the lamentable effects which redound from thence to the three Estates of humane society Oeconomicall, Political, and Ecclesiasticall.

The generall causes of all spirituall miseries, are like unto the naturall causes of all humane infirmities. For they proceed, either from the defectes of certeine things, which are necessary for our spirituall lively hood and well being: or from the excesse of needlesse things, which oppresse the soule, and that faculty of life which is in us, or from that confused and inordinate use of things, which in themselves (if they were well used) are profitable and expedient for health and laudable actions. Which three if they all at once concur in one subject, and that in some notable degree,

degree of neceſſity, that ſoule muſt be extreamely diſtempered, and almoſt irrecoverably weakned.

The affected parts or faculties of life diſeaſed, are conſcience in matters of Religion, in matters of Learning the rationall ſoule, and in humane converſation, all the active powers of our affections and deſires which ſhould depend upon conſcience and upon reaſon. Now becauſe in each of theſe parcels of our life, all the aforenamed cauſes of our miſery do at one concurre.

Therefore the effects of all manner of calamities are infinitly multiplied upon us. For according to the number of ſpirituall, rational, and ſenſuall objects, wherein theſe our faculties are imployed, ſo our failings from the way of peace, and truth become innumerable, from whence alſo our miſeries are increaſed above meaſure, becauſe we find by experience, the truth of Solomons ſaying. That the turning away of the ſimple doth ſlay him, and that his owne iniquities, and the cordes of his ſinnes do take hold of him.

Wee find, I ſay that the fruits of our errors are very bitter, and very many, and ſuch that ſcarſe any ſufficient courſe can be taken to help & correct the ſame. The whole head is ſicke, and the whole heart is faint, from the ſole of the foot, to the crown of the head, there is no ſoundneſſe, but woundes and bruiſes and putrifying ſores, which have not beene cleanſed, nor bound up, nor mollified with oyle.

I will not ſpeake of particulars leaſt I ſhould ſeeme to bee partiall. And becauſe the generall heads heretofore mencioned ſuffice to give me occaſion to ſhew the reme-

dies, which our endeavours by the grace of God will bee able in time to produce, if we bee not utterly left destitute of all manner of assistance, which wee hope will not fall out, seeing our trust is in the Lord, who giveth power unto the faint, and to them that have no might he doth increase strenght.

Therefore as if we wanted nothing (for I know that we shall not want any thing requisite) wee will now speake of the redresse of publicke evils, as having all sufficiency of all meanes to accomplish this worke in him, that is alone all sufficient unto us, and whom we have chosen for our exceeding great reward.

We conceive then, that the afflicted state of Christianity, and in it of the Evangelicall states, and Churches proceeding immediatly from their inward alienations, distractions, and divisions, and more remotely from the excesses, defects, confused and inordinate courses, which are taken up in their profession of Religion and Learning, cannot be helped other wayes, then by working somethings upon the conscience and intellectualls of their Leaders, whereby they may bee enabled to see some safe wayes, by which if not all outward, at least their home breaches may be healed their defects supplied, their excesse restrained, and the abuses of good things rectifyed, if not amongst all, yet amongst those that take upon them sincerly to bee zealous professors of true Christianity.

Now to do this in some way, which may bee to all sides unblameable, wee suppose that no course is more convenient, then a freindly and unpartiall solliciation and proposall of such counsels, as are deducible from undoubted, universall

universall principles, and arise from the foundamentals of that knowledge and practise, which may demonstratively be applied unto the redressing of the particular causes of our present calamities.

This course M. *Comenius* his Associates, and I, now a good many yeares have followed, and through many discouragements constantly mainteined, having still had some hope of more effectuall assistance, then hitherto wee have found, but yet, wee faint not.

For although wee see little appearance of encouragements from men, yet our duty to the publicque doth bind us to continuance, and the love wee beare unto the kingdome of Christ, which we hop to advance in mens soules, doth inable us to overcome all manner of incident difficulties.

Neither do we regard the meanes of our place, estate, or condition in this world, because wee know that God is not onely able, but also wont to make the meaneſt things of this world most effectuall in his owne way of working.

Therefore no man ought to be astonished at the wastnesse of our enterprises, and the contemptibleneſſe of our persons, for it is not in our owne strenght that we walke, but although we know and find more of our owne weakneſſe then any body else, yet we are not at a stand in these proceedings. Neither ought we be suspected or accused of vaine glory or foolishneſſe in affecting, by great undertakings a name amonst men.

For if we can shew both an absolute necessity and possibility of things which wee propose, and that in proposing and urging the same, as hitherto hath been done, wee go

out of the limits of our calling. Then I hope all reasonable & judicious men will cleare us from the suspicion and imputation of vaine glorioussnesse. But our desire is, that the thing it selfe, and our cariage in it may speake for us.

Do we any thing else but crave and communicate from one to another, the counsels which are fit to remedie our common evills, that a tryall may bee made, how farre the Leaders of severall parties can bee brought to assent unto the same?

What ambition can there be in this? Is it not a peece of service lyable to the jealousies and censures of all sides? Is it not a tedious worke importunately to sollicite, and beggingly thus to extort mens advises, and helpefull good wills?

What ambitious aimes then can we have in this matter? But if our ambition be to seeke out good counsells for the publicque, Who can blame us for it? Is it not the duty of every one to do the same?

Can publique evils be taken away without communication of good counsels? Or can counsell bee found without it be sought for? Or can it be admitted, when it is found, except men be wrought upon to receive it? Which being so, Is not then our undertaking a thing most absolutely necessary to be intended?

And againe, if wee will go further. Wee may demaund whether or no, any man can be thought a good Christian, that is not grieved at the affliction of Joseph? And if a good Christian cannot hee but grieved at this affliction. Will hee be able to abstaine from wishing and praying to God, that remedy may be found for it?

Now

Now if he cannot abſteine from this duty, both for conſcience ſake towards God, and for affection to his Church Is it not neceſſary that he ſhould uſe meanes to accompliſh his owne wiſhes ?

And what meanes more fit, or leſſe to be reproved, then to ſollicite for the concurrence and conſent in good counſells to that effect ? And as for the poſſibility and effecting of this. What cauſe is there to doubt thereof ? Is it not poſſible that ſome men may bee found willing to take paines in ſuch a taske ? Or cannot meanes be found to ſupport them in the proſecution of ſuch endeavours ? It cannot be ſaid, that Agents and workemen are wanting. But there is cauſe to complaine that they conſume themſelves for want of maintenance. I am loth to aggravate this complaint, but yet I cannot reſraine from ſaying thus much, That it is a dolefull caſe, and a matter which will not paſſe without ſome remarkeable judgement. That ſuch glorious intentions as theſe, are not thought worthy of any coſt, in a time ſo convenient and neceſſary, whiles all manner of worldly vanities, and ſuperfluities of imaginary pleaſures, are enterteined with great and exceſſive chargeable expences. Is it not a matter to be grieved at, to ſee the miſapplication of mens affections, and the miſimployment of Gods benefits, to be ſo extreamly inordinate. To what purpoſe I beſeech you, hath God given all bleſ-his ſings unto mankind ? Is it not to profit withall in the beſt things ?

And are we not all made Stewards thereof to that effect ? Now what are the beſt things ? Are they not even thoſe, which

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which ſerve moſt for his glory and for the good of his Church, and for our owne ſalvation?

Why then ſhould wee caſt away our ſelves and all his talents, that are ſo uſefull for ſuch excellent ends, upon promiſcuous (if not pernicious) fantaſies and luſts?

Will he not aske us an account of our Stewardſhip, how we have imployed our thoughts? our intellectualls? our memories? our wils? our affections? our members? our ſubſtance & poſſeſſions? If we have applied theſe rather unto vanities, and pleaſures, then unto his ſervice in the communion of Saints. What ſhall wee bee able to anſwer unto him?

But if on the other ſide, we ſet our hearts on the moſt profitable objects, and take up a true courſe of good and faithfull Stewardſhip, wherein the guiftes of God may become uſefull in our hands, to his greateſt glory, and our moſt ineſtimable comfort by the redreſſing of publique miſeries befalling unto the Proteſtant cauſe. Shall wee not have confidence in his preſence, and matter of joy when wee ſhall be called to our account?

Why then ſhould not we freely ſeeke and make it our worke to ſue for helpfull concurrence in ſuch attemps as this? Why may we not challenge our right in craueing aſſiſtance to promote theſe endeavours. But now beeauſe it may be unknowne unto many, what our endevours are to compaſſe this aymes.

I think it fit to open my mind more diſtinctly, that it may appeare, wherein this concurrence is required, and what advancement of neceſſary meanes to help our publicque miſeries ought to bee intended.

For

For seeing heretofore the causes of our diseases, the affected parts of our life, and the symptomes befalling from these to the Oeconomicall, Politicall, and Ecclesiasticall societies of mankind, have beene summarily declared.

Seeing also our scope in the industry wee use to finde a remedy unto these evils hath beene set forth in generall termes, therefore now least wee should seeme to beate the aire in meer universalities, it seemeth expedient to particularize the matter, wherein wee labour, and for which the concurrence of counsells of helpe, and meanes to set forward the same, is thus sought for.

We judge then upon good grounds of reason, after sound advise taken with others, that to cure the evils of Protestants staw and Churches, two things must be intended.

First to overcome grosse ignorance and sensuality, a way must be found to perfite and facilitate Learning, and good education in schooles. And secondly to allay strife, advance saving knowledge, and restraine scandalls in the publicke profession of Religion, the Leading divines of all sides must bee dealt withall, to enterteine thoughts tending to this effect, in the communion of Saints.

The first of these tendeth to cure the diseases of the rationall faculties of mens soules.

The second serveth to settle their consciences in a fundamentall course of godlinesse. If these two fountaines of life, and wells of salvation, the one for the yonger, the other for the more aged soules, could be opened, as easily in the way of execution and practise, as in the way of Theory and counsel, meanes can be shewed to do the same.

Then we are aſſured that all our diſeaſes would ſoone find a cure. But wee know that the execution of affaires is never ſo readily brought to paſſe, as the counſels may bee conceived and propoſed.

Therefore it muſt not be expected, that of a ſodaine ſo univerſall remedies, although found out and approved by the moſt judicious, will bee admitted and made uſe of by all. Cuſtome is a mighty tyrant in ſchooling, to ſtop the true courſe of education. And ſelfe ſeeking in Religion, is the oracle of an Idoll, which teacheth the minds of men, all the principles of diviſion, and maintaineth in their practizes all unconſcionable courſes.

Therefore to overcome theſe monſters without publike noiſe, without giving offence unto any, in a peaceable and quiet manner, is a matter of no ſmall attempt.

Yet we are ingaged in this worke, and by the grace of God are gone on a pretty way therein. Each of us hath his particular taske, M. *Comenius* labours in humane Learning for the reformation of Schooles, and my lot is fallen chiefly in divine matters, to promote the counſels of peace Eccleſiaſticall. He doth worke upon the faculty of reaſon, and I upon the conſciences of men.

So then as reaſon and conſcience ought to go hand in hand, ſo we joyn our endeavours, and as occaſion ſerveth, we labour one for another, each in his owne way. For it is our duty thus to ſollicite one for another, becauſe the aymes, the meanes, the properties, and the effects of our workes, are in ſome ſort inſeparable, and alwaies the one will be ſet forward by the advancement of the other. In his taske he doth comprehend all methods of teaching, all

wayes

wayes of delivering languages and ſciences, and all helpes of furthering vertues, & begetting the ſame in the mindes of tender youth more eaſily and perfectly, then hitherto they have been taught.

And in my worke I inſiſt upon all rules, doctrines, and inducements which tend unto the apprehenſion of fundamentall truths, and performance of duties, whereby the conſcience of conſcionable men inwardly, and their courſe of life outwardly may bee ordered in the feare of God, ſo that they may walke without giving to others, or taking from others the occaſions of offence.

As for him, how farre he hath advanced his worke, the things which himſelfe and his coadjutors, have put forth, and will put forth in due time, for the wayes of ſchooling and panſophicall Learning (whereof their printed Treatiſes can give a more particular accompt) are able to teſtifie for him and for them.

And what belongeth to mee, I am unwilling (neither doth it beſeeme mee) to ſpeake much of my ſelfe, yet I may ſay this; That I have put the ſpirits of moſt of the Proteſtant divines in Europe, to a tryall of their peaceableneſſe.

That I have gathered in the adviſes of all ſides, concerning the meanes of brotherly reconciliation and unity. That I have ſought, found out, and hope to propoſe in due time, an infallible way of framing a fundamentall Confeſſion of faith, to compoſe differences in Religion. That I am perſwaded, by the grace of God, to ſhew unto this age, a demonſtrative way of reſolving and interpreting

holy

holy Scripture, for clering of preſent and future doubts, about the ſenſe thereof.

Theſe are the particular objects of our ſtudies, and in theſe matters wee correſpond one with another, and each with many others. And as for the end and ayme of our correſpondency, it is to this effect. Firſt that we aſſiſt one another in ripening the things which are as yet imperfect in our taskes.

Secondly that we may advertiſe one another of all important occurrences, which may either advantage or diſadvantage our intentions.

And thirdly that wee may communicate one to another all manner of counſels, whereby the agitation of theſe endeavours may be continued, the matters intended brought to paſſe in Schooles and Churches, and that with the foreknowledge and conſent of thoſe that rule in publicque affaires.

For wee do not theſe things ſneakingly in corners, or factiouſly for this or that partie, but we ſtrive to approve our ſelves before the conſciences of all men, in a publicke manner as ſervants of God for the good of every one. For which cauſe unto all ſuch as are judiciouſly able to conſider the importance of theſe matters, we are at all times ready to give particular account of all our proceedings. For indeed our ſingular deſire is, to come unto the light but yet we are unwilling to precipitate our ſelves and theſe meditations unto the veiw of the world, or proſtitute our counſels before the time unto vulgar judgments, becauſe wee are not ignorant of the prejudicate humours of this age.

There-

Therefore our care muſt bee, not onely to intend the things aforeſaid, namely to worke a ſupply of the defects which are in Religion and Learning, to procure that the ſuperfluities of both may bee cut off, and to propoſe rules fit to rectifie the confuſed uſe of good things therein, but alſo to prepare the ſpirits of men to bee willing to admit of meanes tending to peace and truth, which either may be hereafter, or already are found out, and experimentally known to be expedient for the way of private or publicke Reformation of notorious inconveniences.

Thus then our induſtry is imployed alſo, to wait and watch for ſeaſonable occaſions, to inſinuate matters by degrees in a manner which is almoſt inſenſible. And becauſe the evilneſſe of theſe times conſtraine us unto this ſlow courſe of proceeding, & moſt mens thoughts in the meane while are taken up another way, namely to obſerve matters of preſent agitation upon the publicke ſtate.

Therefore wee ſeeme in appearance to looſe our labour and to doe nothing, but wee know that our labour is not in vaine. For when others ſhall have followed their owne wayes ſufficiently, and wearied themſelves therein, when they ſhall have found the fruits thereof to be other then they did expect, when the judgements that are now ripe, ſhal have opened their eares to receive better counſel and inſtruction, it will then appeare to what purpoſe our endeavours have ſerved, and what uſe may be made of our intentions and negotiations.

In the meane time the Prophets counſell ſhall bee our practiſe, when he ſaith thus, *Come my people enter into thy chambers, and ſhut thy doores about thee, hide thy ſelfe as*

it were for a little moment, till the indignation be overpaſt. Yet in doing this, we intend not to be idle, but our ſtudy will bee to ripen our thoughts, to ſollicite aſſiſtance againſt a time more convenient, to allay impediments which are, or may be incident to incline leading men to impartiall affections, to diſpoſe all men to moderate thoughts of themſelves and others, and conſequently, not to condemne raſhly, nor to ſuſpect ſodainly, not to contradict violently, not to oppoſe maliciouſly, not to hate irreconcileably, not to breake off ſociety for every ſmall opinion and difference in judgement, and not to preſume in any thing above that which is written.

How farre God may bleſſe theſe private endeavours no man doth know. What occaſions hereafter may bee offered in publicke for us to ſtep in alſo, and ſhew our ſelves upon the ſtage, we will leave to the diſpoſition of his providence over us, who hath hitherto wrought all our works for us. If wee can find no helpe to further theſe aymes, yet we ſhall be able to teſtifie for our ſelves, that we have not neglected our duty in labouring for the ſame.

If I were to ſpeake onely to your Lordſhip in this diſcourſe, I am confident, that I ſhould not need to uſe any further inſinuations to obteine favour and good will towards theſe intentions, becauſe I am fully perſuaded of your Lordſhips generous inclination, and godly zeale towards all laudable enterpriſes and of the ability of your judgement to diſcerne both of theſe, and of the meanes fit to advance the ſame.

Yet becauſe it may be uſefull to ſhew this letter to ſome others, of whoſe diſpoſitions, I have no ſuch aſſurance.

Therefore

Therefore I humbly crave permiſſion that I may inſiſt a little further upon this matter, and preſſe it home to the affections of thoſe that may come to ſee it at ſ. occaſions.

If I ſhould then debate with the inclinations of this age M. *Comenius* his cauſe and myne owne. And if it be permitted unto us, to plead for righteouſneſſe, and call juſtice in this caſe. Wee will appeale unto the conſciences and judgements of all judicious and conſcionable men, concerning the matters which wee ayme at, compared with other publicke undertakings, whether or no they can find any objects of charitable affections more worthy of embracing at this time, then theſe purpoſes are.

As for us, we confeſſe ingeniouſly that we have not been able to find out any thing more neceſſary to be lought for, or fit to bee attempted, more profitable for the Proteſtant cauſe, or ſeaſonable to remedy the miſeries of theſe times, more laudable in reſpect of Gods glory, more eſtimable in reſpect of Religion, more acceptable in reſpect of Learning and Vertue, and laſtly more deſirable, more lovely, and of better uſe & report in all reſpects, then theſe things are which heretofore have been mencioned. For which cauſe alſo we have thought it our duty, to leave all other things, and imploy our whole ſtudy in theſe.

For conſcience doth bind us to chooſe and affect the beſt objects, which we can conceive, and we think that hardly any object truely profitable unto humane felicity can bee apprehended within the compaſſe either of Religion or of Learning, which may not be advanced by theſe our under takings.

What-

Whatſoever then any man in particular doth affect to make himſelfe or others more perfect in matters of conſcience, or of reaſon he ſhall find our concurrence and ſerviceableneſſe in it, that it may bee fundamentally accompliſhed.

For unto the maine principles and fundamentall rules, whereby theſe two faculties may bee rectified, our *Genius* doth lead us, and our induſtry is applied. Now if it bee objected, that theſe undertakings, although they be in the propoſall moſt excellent and commendable, yet being in the execution too waſt, & in appearance ſcarſe feaſuable, that therefore moſt men cannot relliſh the ſame, but are ſooner taken up, and wholy ſet upon their own particular intentions. Then we anſwer, that it may indeed be ſo.

But yet that this is not an excuſe for any to neglect the conſequence of ſo great an enterpriſe, chiefly when ſuch things only are required, which are due to all honeſt endeavours of a more particular nature. And indeed becauſe all men ordinarily regard only their particular contentations, & raiſe not their thoughts unto univerſall objects. Therefore all our affaires are in confuſion, therefore nothing can be brought unto any perfection.

This very thing is one of the maine rootes of our calamity, which would to God wee could cure in all ſuch as may happen to ſee this diſcourſe. For even this is our complaint, that no body layeth to heart the Apoſtles commandement and practiſe. His commandement is *Phil.* 2. 4. That we ſhould not looke onely to our ſelves, but alſo unto others.

And hee telleth us, that his practiſe was, not to pleaſe himſelf

himſelfe, and to ſeeke his owne profit, but to pleaſe others and to ſeeke the profit of many that all might bee ſaved. 1 *Cor.* 10, 33. I ſay then our complaint is even this.

That matters of a publicke, univerſall, and ſpirituall nature, which are moſt fit to transforme the ſoules of men into a better frame, and ſave them from ignorance and vice, are ſcarſe at all regarded, in comparison of particular intentions, wherein men uſe to ſeek their private contentment.

I will not ſpeake of the time, care, and coſt, which is ſpent very oft upon ſinfull gaming, feasting, and fantaſticall toyes, which might bee ſpared and beſtowed upon charitable uſes.

But I will compare other more ſerious objects (wherein ſome uſe to glory and pretend to benefit the publicke) unto theſe endeavours.

We ſee then that ſome uſe to ſeeke out rare antiquities of *M. S.*, and Monuments, and give large allowance unto Agents ſent forth to purchaſe the ſame.

I will not diſcommend this curioſity (although the benefit doth ſeldome anſwer the coſt and paines) becauſe antiquity ought to bee reverenced. But I dare ſay, that if halfe of theſe expences which are miſimployed that way were given towards the perfiting of ſuch taskes as here are mencioned, that the publicke ſtate of Learning and Religion would be an hundred fold more benefited thereby.

For whereas on the one ſide, thoſe Antiquities are commonly kept up to ſmall uſe or none at all, in Libraries and Cloſets, from the eyes of the world, till perhaps they be-

come a prey unto victorious ennemies as of late it is befalne to those of Mantua, Mentz, Heidelberg, Wirtzberg, and others, and then are quite lost and destroyed by barbarous souldiers.

So on the other side, those matters which wee intend are of most eminent and present usefulnesse, not unto one or two, but unto all mankind in all estates, and are things of such a nature, that no desolation can befall unto them. But very time it selfe, which destroyeth all other things, will make these to increase and abound towards all ages of posterity.

Thus then there is no comparison to bee made betwixt the one and the other object of expences.

Others build stately houses, keepe a great rancke, and spend much on a large table in the way of hospitality, as it is called. This is somewhat more conspicious in the eye of the world, then the other custome, and deserveth the commendation of a good commonwealths man.

But what is this in comparison of the building up of those living houses of the everliving God, which are the spirits, the consciences, and the understandings of men. And if a man studieth to keepe a great rancke in the commonwealth of Israel, and to be of note in the kingdome of wisedome and godlinesse, by mainteyning and helping to furnish a faire spirituall table unto the Citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, to the end that their soules may bee fed with knowledge and with vertue in all righteousnesse and in holinesse.

Is he not a thousand times more to be commended then the other, that spendeth a great deale of substance upon his

his owne belly and backe? The Lord hath promiſed by his Prophet *Iſaiah* 25,6. to ſhew his hoſpitality. For hee will make upon his holy mountaine (which is his Church) a feaſt unto all people of fat things, a feaſt of wines on the Lees, of fatt things full of marrow, of wynes on the Lees well refined.

Now to dreſſe this feaſt, and propoſe it unto all people, the Lord will uſe no doubt ſome inſtruments, as hee did once make uſe of his Diſciples, the five looſes and two fiſhes, when the people were ſitting on the graſſe, by rowes and companies. But who ſhalbe theſe inſtruments of Gods hoſpitality? *to diſtribute*

Surely none more likely to bee admitted unto this dignity, then ſuch as will apply their affections to advance and mainteine this kind of ſociality and good fellowſhip among ſoules, whereunto we labour, to invite all the godly and learned of this age.

There be others that ſpend their ſubſtance to farre better uſe, then theſe former doe, namely ſuch as build and found Schooles and Colledges to be nurſeries of Learning and meanes of good education.

Theſe come neereſt unto our purpoſe; yet I muſt tell them, that there is no compariſon to bee made betwixt a materiall and a ſpirituall Schoole, betwixt an earthly, and an heavenly Colledge, betwixt a ſpeciall Nurſery and a generall directory, betwixt a particular and a general foundation for all grace, vertue, and Learning.

The ~~foundations may not only be overthrowne & decay~~ materiall, earthly and particular Schooles and Colledges, but bee abuſed, and become ſtrong holds of ſuperſti- *& foundations may not onely bee overthrowne decay &c*

tion and of Popery, and ſo become a meanes to beate downe the truth of Religion, and to adulterate true Learning.

But theſe others foundations of ſcience and vertue which we labour to prepare for the Schooles & Colledges of all ages, cannot be deſtroied nor perverted to any ſiniſter uſe, but will ſtand firme as *Mount Sion* that cannot bee moved.

If then any doth affect the glory which is promiſed unto men of charitable affections by the Prophet *Iſaiah*. That of them ſhal come the builders of old waſt places, & raiſers of the foundations of many generations, and that they ſhall be called the repayrers of the breaches, and reſtorers of the pathes to dwell in.

I ſay if any affect this glory, they ſhall ſooner and more effectually atteine unto it, by the intentions which may be had about theſe objects of ſpirituall communion, then by the other materiall buildings.

I will confeſſe that both can very well ſtand together. But yet without theſe fundamentall wayes of knowledge and practiſe which wee doe ſeeke after, the other foundations will doe no good, unto the Commonwealth of Iſrael.

Others that build materiall Churches and Almehouſes, are alſo to be commended, but in compariſon of theſe publicke objects which wee ſtand for, they are of the ſame kind with the Schooles and Colledges even now mentioned.

Therefore we may conclude, that the lovelineſſe, and eſtimation of all other particular and outward ſubjects of Charity,

Charitie, is not once to be named, when this univerſal and ſpirituall matter is propoſed. And as for the vaſtneſſe of things here mencioned, and ſeeming unfeaſableneſſe of this worke, that will not trouble any man that is in love with grace, and vertue, and knowledge, as things to bee fought for themſelves, or that is ſo generous as to adventure upon the likelieſt wayes of helping publicque miſeries.

For if the waſtneſſe of our miſery cannot be cured, but by ſuch a remedy, we muſt either deſpaire of our recovery and ſafety, or els admit the worke to be poſſible. And indeed we hope by the grace of God in due time, to make it appeare, that nothing hitherto mentioned is to be counted unfeaſable by men of judgement. God hath not made anything both at once neceſſary and altogether impoſſible.

Now it is abſolutely neceſſary that fundamentall truths and duties be diſcovered, and fundamentally propoſed to cure our ſpirituall diſeaſes.

Therefore it is not impoſſible to bring this diſcovery and propoſall to paſſe. Nay we are ſure that God will effectually bring it to paſſe, becauſe he doth promiſe ſo to doe, and becauſe he hath already begun to fulfill his promiſe which is made, *Iſaiah* 28, 16, till the end.

For he hath already laid the foundation of an univerſall Reformation in Sion, even his fundamentall ſtone, his tryed ſtone, his precious corner ſtone, his ſure foundation is laid in Chriſt Jeſus, who is God bleſſed for evermore. Amen.

Now then the reſt of the worke muſt needs alſo follow,

for our God is wonderfull in counſell, and excellent in working, therefore he will performe that which he hath ſaid, he will lay judgement to the line, and righteouſneſſe unto the Plummet, and that he may raiſe a ſtedfaſt building upon his owne foundation, he will ſweepe away (as there he ſaith) all the deceitfulneſſe of lies and unrighteouſneſſe.

This being his promiſe, we muſt not think the accompliſhment thereof impoſſible. Is not Chriſt come to deſtroy the workes of the divell? And where are his works, I pray you, but in our ſoules? Or what are his workes? but the corruption of our conſciences, of our wills, and of our affections. In theſe then his workes are to bee deſtroyed.

If therefore we do not miſtruſt the power of him who is the Lord of hoſts, who hath overcome the world, and the Prince thereof, who biddeth us be of good comfort, becauſe he hath ordained peace for us, who will worke all our workes within us.

Then we ought not to faint, or imagine this worke to be unfeaſable. But our duty is to come forth unto the field, and with the ſtrenght that God hath given us, to helpe the the Lord againſt the mighty.

Why ſhould any man bee ſoe preſumptuouſly diffident of the accompliſhment of good things, promiſed by Almighty God, as to think every thing impoſſible which he doth not conceive feaſable in his rationall capacity.

Are no good purpoſes to be aymed at, but ſuch as wee know meanes to accompliſh by our owne induſtry? Why then ſhould we pray daily for the comming of Gods kingdome

dome. Is the approching of Gods kingdome a thing within our reach? If it were, why ſhould it be ſo hard a matter to bring mens thoughts to reflect upon univerſall objects and embrace the ſame?

Yet we are not made to thinke only of our ſelves, neither in the ſtate of nature, nor in the ſtate of grace and regeneration, becauſe in this eſtate we are appointed to be members of Chriſts myſticall body, and ſo to live in the communion of Saints.

As concerning my worke of reconcilement. I heare many ſay, That it is a matter rather to be wiſhed, then to bee hoped for. And when they are asked the reaſon, why it is not to be hoped for, they commonly alledge nothing materiall, but their owne diffidences, ariſing from the preſent difficulties of the times, and the boiſterouſneſſe of certeine mens diſpoſitions. As if either the times could never bee more ſeaſonable, nor the diſpoſitions of untoward men be altered and wrought upon.

This is our cuſtome. That which wee underſtand not, we put downe as it were not, or could not bee, wee truſt not unto God, becauſe we know not his power over mens ſoules, nor the tenor of his promiſes towards the conquering of the ſame. Yet if we did but obſerve how eaſily the ſphere of mens imaginations & affections may be moved, when once they are but made attentive and docible, and how ſoone men become afterward tractable, when their conſcience is moved, they would not be ſo raſh in diſcouraging themſelves and others from all hopes of ſucceſſe in this buſineſſe.

But goto, I will ſuppoſe, that when all our workes are

brought

brought to perfection; when all our methods and wayes of Learning; all our helpes of reformation; all our meanes of peace in Religion are found out and prepared for uſe, ſo fully, that nothing more is to be done, but to apply the ſame, and to put them to practiſe.

Then I ſuppoſe (ſay I) that no effect will enſue thereof in our time, and that wee ſhall never ſee the fruits of our labours, What then? Ought we not to labour for poſterity? Ought we not to apply our minds to good things onely becauſe they are good? Shall an heathen bee able to teach us. *Ipſa ſibi virtus pretium.* That vertue is a reward for it ſelfe, And we Chriſtians not be able to love vertue for it ſelfe, and practiſe this doctrine?

But beſide the dignity of vertue, there is Gods commaund. And is not this a ſufficient motive to do good to a Chriſtian? What if he commaunding us ſtrictly to ſeeke peace, to ſerve our brethren through love, to beare the burdens one of another, to do good unto all, to ſeeke the profit of others in renouncing our ſelves for their ſake, yet will not by any meanes (though we endeavour all this ſincerely) let us ſee the fruit of our labours. Ought wee not therefore to do our duties.

Ought wee therefore to neglect his command? God forbid. For he that will not obey God, except he can foreſee that his ſervice will bee acceptable and effectuall unto men, is not worthy to be called the ſervant of God. And when a man looſeth his labour here, hath hee afterwards no hope of reward? Is it not ſaid, that God will render to every man according to his deeds. *Rom.*2,6. Sure then I loſe not my labour towards him.

And

And for whom I pray is glory honour, and peace, ordeyned. Is it not to every man that worketh good? Hee then that looketh for the praiſe, which is obteyned in life eternall, muſt reſolve to come to it, by a patient continuance in well doing, whether his doings bee effectuall towards men or not.

Therefore although I ſhould certeinly know before hand that my worke ſhould not prevaile with men. Yet I am bound not to leave it. But contrarily, when I ſee apparent evidences of doing good in it. Were it not baſely done to forgo ſuch a duty, onely for timerouſneſſe and cowardly feare of ill ſucceſſe, præconceived before ever the worke be put to triall.

Whether therefore we looke to the thing to be done in it ſelfe, or to him that doth commaund it, or to our obligation of obedience in doing it, or to the publicke miſeries that call for our aſſiſtance, or to Gods intention in working of the effect, or to the recompenſe of reward, although the effect follow not.

There is no cauſe to think that our worke ſhould either not bee proſecuted, or not accompliſhed; becauſe in all theſe reſpects, it is not onely moſt neceſſary and poſſible but of all other works that can be named in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, at this time the moſt commendable, and ſo conſequently the moſt worthy of all charitable affections, and of all helpes whereby it may be ſet forward.

Which poſition being thus made good. If now it ſhould be required of us. What helpe then and charitable concurrence wee doe expect in this negotiation? Wee anſwer: That nothing elſe is deſired, but ſuch effects of chriſtian

good will, as ſhall appeare to every body to be uſefull. Firſt to the ſoules of all men in this age. And then to the publicke good of Gods Church in all time to come, by our ſerviceableneſſe.

For except a man find himſelf bound to aſſiſt the worke for theſe motives, and then us in very deed to be effectually ſerviceable unto the ſame, in the way of Learning and Religion, we deſire not at all any aſſiſtance from him.

But if hee perceiveth the nature of our ſtudies to bee really ſuch as we have hitherto deſcribed. Then we intreat him to enter into his owne boſome, and conſider his proper abilities, to ſee wherein he can be ſteedable and beare a part of theſe burthens with us. If he can give counſell and will concurre in meditations, we ſhall be ready to furniſh him with matter of deliberation. If he cannot do this himſelfe, but is able to ſtirre up others to performe this duty, he ſhall deſerve thankes, as if he had done it himſelfe. But if his abilities reach not to theſe objects, to advãce the ſame either way. Then his thoughts may fall upon ſome other more outward taske and duty proportionall to his faculties and ſubordinate unto the Communion of Saints. Thoſe that were not able to bring unto the building of the Tabernacle of God, raiſed by the hand of Moſes, gold, ſilver, or precious ſtones, it was free for them to bring ſilke and linnen. And if their hand alſo could not reach unto this, then meaner things, even Goates haire and Rams skinnes were acceptable and well plaiſing offerings unto the Lord, if they came but from a free willing mind.

Therefore if a man be truely deſirous to ſet forward the building of this tabernacle, hee may joyne himſelfe divers

wayes therein. For although he perhaps cannot be actually an Agent for it, yet hee can favour the Agency, and assist the Agents thereof. Hee can pray to God for the successe of the worke, he can speake of it, recommend it upon occasion to his freinds.

He can if hee bee of meanes, let a part and contribute quarterly or yearly something towards the maintenance of Agents, towards the furtherance of their correspondency, towards the Postage and conveyance of letters, towards the charges of their travells, towards the transcription of writes and copies communicable to many, towards the printing of discourses and treaties, which must serve to ripen the worke in all mens apprehensions, and when things are printed or copied out, to shew the same unto others, and inquire their judgement thereof, that if any material defects, or offensive matters be discovered in the worke, the same may be though upon and taken out of the way.

Now if a man bee not able or willing in a businesse of such a nature to do any thing of all these duties, I do not know what to think of him, Sure I am, hee doth not live as a member of the Commonwealth of Israel, and knoweth not either what the end of our conversation in Christianity ought to be, or wherein he ought to imploy his talents to profit withall unto his owne salvation. For we must not deceive our selves to thinke that our salvation can bee wrought out and brought to perfection in a solitary way, without the edification of our brethren.

This is a thing that cannot be, for God hath appointed the members of Christs body to grow up one by the helpe

of the other, and all jointly to come together unto the ſpirituall eſtate of happineſſe.

Even as the naturall members of our earthly bodies grow up all at once in ſtature proportionall one to another, till they come unto their full ſtrenght. Let a man conſider the 2, chap. of the 1. Epiſtle to the Corinth. and the 4. chap. of the Epiſtle to the Epheſ. from the 1. verſe to the 17. There he ſhall perceive the counſell of God in this matter, and be able to underſtand the miſtery of the Communion of Saints, wherein every joynt is bound to ſupply its effectuall working in the meaſure of every part, towards the increaſe of the body unto the edifying of it ſelfe in love. God would not have the Ancients to come to perfection without us, *Hebr.* 11, 40.

Why then ſhould we think to come to perfection without our brethren. Chriſt himſelf was not made perfect, till he had ſerved out his time for the edificatiō of the Church. *Math* 20,28. For he came not to ſerve himſelfe, or to bee ſerved, but to ſerve, and give himſelf a ranſome for many. Therefore S. John ſaith, 1 *John* 3,16. That becauſe he hath ſo loved us, wee in like manner ſhould love one another, and lay downe our lives for the brethren. In the 22 of S. Lukes Goſpell, Chriſt ſaith, That he doth appoint unto us the kingdome of heaven, as his father did appoint it unto him.

Therefore wee muſt not hope to come to it by another way, then by ſerving others in that which belongeth to our common ſalvation. There is no readier way to obteine a bleſſing from God for a mans ſelfe, then to ſeeke and labour to procure it for others, becauſe God giveth nothing

unto

unto any, but for this end, that it ſhould be profitable unto others.

Therefore David ſaith, Pſal. 16. 2, 3, O God my good reacheth not unto thee, but unto the Saints that are on the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.

This is the courſe then which muſt be followed to profit in all grace, for hee that beſtoweth the paines only for his private ends, without any reſpect to the Communion of Saints, ſoweth unto the fleſh.

But if a man will ſow unto the ſpirit, that from thence hee may reape the fruit of life eternall. There is none other ſoile wherein his ſeed muſt be ſowen, then the communion of Saints. Now we know the Apoſtle ſaith; That whatſoever a man ſoweth, that he alſo ſhall reape. As the ſoile is, ſo the fruit will be. If he ſoweth to himſelfe, hee ſhall reape from his fleſh corruption.

But if he be a good husbandman, & choſing his ground rightly, ſoweth his ſeed to a publicke good, he ſhall reape of the ſpirit ſalvation in due ſeaſon if he faint not.

Therefore the Apoſtle willeth us not to be weary in well doing, but as wee have opportunity to doe good unto all men, eſpecially unto thoſe that are of the houſehold of faith. If wee know this to bee our duty, and performe it faithfully, happy ſhall we be. For every worke of this kind ſhall follow us after this life, becauſe they are built upon a foundation which will laſt eternally.

I will not inſiſt any further to uſe perſwaſions in this matter, for if theſe reaſons cannot move, I know none that are more forcible. Many more in number, even to to fill up a great volume, might be alleadged, if we would

deſcend unto particulars, but they are all ſubordinate unto theſe, and have no force of perſwaſion, but what is finally reſolved into theſe heads. And truly if a man doth not aſſiſt us in the work only for theſe reaſons. I know not if his aſſiſtance bee thankes worthy, certeinly it will bee of little profit before God unto himſelf, howſoever it may become beneficall unto us.

For God that ſearcheth the hearts, regardeth not the materiall part of the worke, but the principle, and ground whence it proceedeth in the heart.

Therefore wee deſire not ſo much to bee helped in our ſtreits (for wee know God can do that ſodainly if it were expedient either for our good, or his glory) but that men ſhould take theſe intentions and ſtudies really to heart upon theſe conſiderations as we do, whether we be helped in our particular grievances or not. For our grievances are not things in themſelves to be heeded, no more then our perſons to be regarded.

And verily it had perhaps not been amiſſe to have paſſed our grievances in ſilence. For it may be that ſome men wil interpret theſe complaints and large commendations of the works which we proſecute, as a matter of ſelf ſeeking in us, whereby we intend rather to ſet forth our ſelves, then the condition of the buſineſſe aimed at, but God doth know our hearts, and I hope all men of honeſt and godly diſpoſitions, will think of us as they would be thought of in the like caſe.

As for me, I am reſolved from henceforth never to open my mouth any further in commendation of mine owne intentions, leaſt I ſhould ſeeme not to preach Chriſt alone,

or

or commend unto men the truth of his Goſpell, ſo much as my ſelf and mine owne endeavours.

Therefore if God will not by this meanes of exhortation (which rather to ſatisfie the deſire of ſome others, then of mine own accord hath been propoſed to ſtirre up Coadjutors and helpes of the worke, ſuch as are requiſite, I am for my part reſolved to endure it patiently knowing it to be his will, whoſe pleaſure is our happineſſe, if we undergo it with cheerefulneſſe.

Whatſoever it may be for the time preſent, we are ſure in the later end, it will prove moſt perfect, and moſt acceptable unto us, only we muſt give our ſelves freely over unto it.

And this we ſhalbe able to do by the grace of God, if we labour earneſtly, that the inward ſpirituall man, may bee renewed day by day in us. For then our light affliction which is but for a moment, will worke in us a farre exceeding and eternall weight of glory, whiles we looke not at the things now ſeen, but at the things not yet ſeene, for the things apparant are temporall, but the things which are not ſeene are eternall.

Becauſe wee know, that if once the temporall ſtate of preſent things in the earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, that we ſhall have a building of God, an houſe not mad with hands, but eternall in the heavens, where all things which we now ſeeke for, ſhall be abundantly graunted unto us.

Therefore wee faint not, but labour according to the meaſure of ſtrength beſtowed upon us, to perſwade all men to live anſwerable to the calling of God in the Goſpell of

peace

peace through the communion of Saints, according to the tenor of his covenant, wherein we have all knowledge and vertue offred unto us, though Jesus Christ, who by it becommeth unto us, all wisedome, all righteousnesse, all holinesse, and all redemption, so that of his fulnesse, we can receive grace for grace, and bee made perfect unto the measure of the stature of his fulnesse.

To his favour and grace I do commend your Honour, and craving pardon for this prolixity, I take my leave and rest,

This 14. of Decemb: 1638.

Your Lordships most humble and dutifull servant in Christ.

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